

## On The Bridge

Good news on the bridge. We took a look at Powder Point Bridge Tuesday morning and found about a dozen workmen on the job. If present progress continues, the half-mile wooden structure may be open for business by (or before) the end of July.

Can you imagine Duxbury without Big Beach?

### The Problem

Simply stated, the problem is: Duxbury Beach is being ravaged by the ever-increasing recreational demands placed upon it. Dunes are being eroded at such a rate that the entire vertical topography (dune height) has been drastically lowered in recent

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years. This has been the direct result of foot and vehicular traffic moving indiscriminately over sand dunes, destroying the vegetation which serves to hold sand grains in place.

Following are excerpts from an article appearing in the *Duxbury Clipper* on May 8, 1969. The committee strongly recommends this article for those citizens sincerely interested in the history and preservation of the beach. After reading this article, it is clear that the Duxbury Beach Trustees deserve the sincerest thanks from the townspeople for having the foresight to set aside this unique asset for the use and enjoyment of all.

### The History

For more than 30 years prior to 1919 Duxbury Beach was owned by members of the Wright family who owned the once splendid estate opposite the Public Library, now the site of the Eben H. Ellison Middle School. However fantastic the idea may seem in the light of present knowledge of the instability of the beach, they had serious plans, as shown by old time maps, for developing the full length of the beach in small house lots. Undeterred by the famous 1898 storm, they built 3 fairly sizable cottages, one at High Pines and 2 between High Pines and the bridge. In 1919 the executor of the estate of Georgianna B. Wright offered the property for sale. With the plans for real estate development known and the even more serious danger that the beach might develop along Revere Beach or Coney Island lines, a meeting was held and some 18 to 20 loyal Duxburyites raised enough money to buy the property. Title was taken on Nov. 29, 1919, in the name of Duxbury Beach Association, a common law trust

organized for the purpose of acquiring the beach and protecting it for the benefit of Duxbury.

Until 1941 the public parking space at the north end was so far from the Duxbury Bay side of the beach that public bathing was for all practical purposes limited to the outer beach. In 1941, therefore, to satisfy the demands of the public for bathing in the bay, the Association extended the road from the old northerly parking space to the cove of the beach and there built an entirely new parking space and the public bathhouse and lunchroom now known as the Pavillion. These improvements were financed in part by additional subscriptions from shareholders and in part from proceeds of sale for summer residence purposes of small parcels of land outside the park

area at the extreme north end of the beach.

Every few years between 1930 and 1950, the question of State acquisition of Duxbury Beach was raised in one form or another and often bills were introduced into the Legislature to accomplish this. For this period of more than 20 years, the threats were successfully defeated by Duxbury's able and watchful representatives in the Legislature with such assistance was they requested from the selectmen and from the Duxbury Beach Association Trustees; but no special effort was required during this period by Duxbury residents in general.

For more than 37 years, sometimes with honest differences of opinion, but more often, particularly in recent years, with complete harmony and mutual understanding, Duxbury and the Duxbury Beach Association have cooperated in beach problems, with the broad objectives of keeping the beach in its natural state and of giving Duxbury residents as much preferential use as seems practical in view of the ever-present threat of State taking. This cooperative effort has made possible results which could not have been achieved by either alone. For example, based on legal opinions of the Town Counsel and of counsel for the Association, if the town own the beach as a public park it could not differentiate between Duxbury residents and the public generally; as private owners, the Beach Association can and does. The Beach Association, on the other hand, could not afford to set up arrangements for issuing beach stickers to Duxbury residents and could not afford to pay for policing the parking spaces and the beach in general. These functions can best be provided by the town; and backed up by town meeting votes as required, it has loyally done so.